News Framing as a Multiparadigmatic Research Program: A Response to Entman

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By Paul D'Angelo

A large and growing body of mass media research centers on the concept of "framing." The purpose of this essay is to respond to Entman's (1993) call for the establishment of a paradigm of news framing research. Drawing on work in the sociology of knowledge, I argue that news framing research operates according to principles of a Lakatosian research program (Lakatos, 1974) in which researchers employ and refine specific theories in order to generate findings in particular studies about a common core of irrefutable conjectures. In the metatheory developed here, the research program is inclusive of three paradigmatic outlooks, called cognitive, constructionist, and critical, that provide researchers with specific images with which to examine the interaction of media frames and individual- or social-level reality. Thus, contra Entman (1993), I argue that there is not, nor should there be, a single "mended" paradigm of framing research. The research program has benefited the communication discipline by encouraging researchers to use specific theories to progressively explicate a complex process.

In the reprise of the *Journal of Communication*'s "Ferment in the Field" special issue (Gerbner, 1983), Robert Entman (1993) praised framing as an ascendant research program in mass communication, but bemoaned the "scattered conceptualization" that hindered its development into a paradigm. He argued first that most framing research is based on inconsistent meanings of its core terms: "frame," "framework," and "framing." Entman (1993) acknowledged that various theories might be necessary to understand the power of frames in texts. Eclectic use of theory and inconsistent definitions of key terms, however, have inhibited a "general statement of framing theory" and have led to a "fractured paradigm" of framing research (Entman, 1993, p. 51).

Also, Entman (1993) argued that by mending the framing paradigm, communication could redress a nagging metatheoretical issue, namely, a "lack of disciplinary status because of deficient core knowledge" (p. 51). Guided by a "general statement of framing theory that shows exactly how frames become embedded within . . . news texts, [and] how framing influences thinking," communication scholars could accomplish their "mission [to bring] together insights and theories that would otherwise remain scattered in other disciplines" (Entman, 1993, p. 51).

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The purpose of this essay is to critically evaluate Entman's position by presenting a new metatheory of framing, focusing on the growing body of work on news framing. I draw on work from the sociology of knowledge, particularly Kuhn (1962), Lakatos (1974), and Ritzer (1975, 1981, 1992), to argue that knowledge about framing has accumulated in a coordinated way because the study of framing operates as a Lakatosian research program. The metatheory of Lakatos (1974) claims that knowledge about a phenomenon grows within an environment, called a research program, that both supports competition among different theories and provides criteria to evaluate individual theories in light of new data. Lakatos (1974) limited the role of paradigms, but my metatheory proposes that the three paradigms endemic to communication, called cognitive, constructionist, and critical, enable the news framing research program to function.

Thus, contrary to Entman (1993), I argue that there is not, nor should there be, *a* paradigm of framing. Rather, knowledge about framing has accumulated because the research program encourages researchers to employ and refine many theories about the framing process under the guidance of distinct paradigmatic perspectives on the relationship between frames and framing effects. Theoretical and paradigmatic diversity have led to a comprehensive view of the framing process, not fragmented findings in isolated research agendas.

The following section discusses the nature of research programs in the growth of scientific knowledge and the role of paradigms in framing research, leading to the point that Entman's definition of paradigm hinders an accurate understanding of framing research because it is based on Kuhnian premises. After that, I distinguish the three paradigms of news framing research. In the third section, I present a model of the news framing process. This model emerges out of the three paradigms and diverges from the sort of synthesis Entman (1993) prescribes. I conclude that communication's integrationist mission is well served by the theoretical and paradigmatic diversity of the news framing research program.

News Framing Scholarship as a Research Program

In arguing that framing is a "fractured paradigm," Entman (1993) defines a paradigm as "a general theory that informs a body of scholarship on the outcomes and operation of any particular system of thought or action" (p. 51). This definition elides the terms "theory" and "paradigm." Because these are two distinct metatheoretical aspects of scholarly inquiry (Lakatos, 1974; Ritzer, 1981), this elision signals a flaw in his metatheory. I propose that the study of news framing research is a research program. Also, I draw on recent self-reflexive dialogues in communication (Dervin, Grossberg, O'Keefe, & Wartella, 1989; Gerbner, 1983; Levy & Gurevitch, 1993a, 1993b) to explicate how paradigms serve this research program.

The Nature of Research Programs
The term paradigm has long been both central and contested in the debate about the growth of scientific knowledge. In *The Structure of Scientific Revolutions*,

Thomas Kuhn (1962) argued that researchers labor in a condition called "normal science" when theories they use are unchallenged by anomalous findings. Normal science supports a shared paradigmatic outlook among researchers, which, to Kuhn (1962), is ordinarily characterized by a single, dominant theory. In the context of empirical inquiry, the paradigm enables scholars to (a) share definitions of core concepts, (b) agree on the most useful theoretical statement about relationships among these concepts, (c) develop relevant hypotheses and research questions, and (d) agree on the research methods and instrumentation with which to most appropriately collect and analyze data. Kuhn (1962) argued that the paradigm creates a sense of psychological exclusiveness that binds researchers to these definitions, theories, and methods.

Lakatos (1974) argued that Kuhn (1962) propounded an irrational view of scientific change and proposed as a metatheoretical remedy that theories operate within research programs. Lakatos (1974) shifted Popper's (1963) argument that piecemeal refutations of conjectures fuel scientific discovery to argue instead that knowledge grows when theories anticipate, and even generate, apparent refutations. He called this the "positive heuristic" of the research program. Within it, theories are positively appraised when they supply predictive gratification about a phenomenon. Beyond that, theories that generate novel "auxiliary hypotheses" are especially useful because they produce a "consistently progressive theoretical shift" in light of "intermittently progressive empirical shift[s]" (Lakatos, 1974, p. 134). Lakatos (1974) contended that researchers should study a phenomenon using many different theories. Still, researchers' efforts are "connected by a remarkable continuity which welds [these efforts] into a research programme" (p. 132). Lakatos (1974) labeled this continuity the "negative heuristic," or hard core, of the research program. Again shifting Popper's (1963) position, he argued that the hard core consisted of conjectures that are disconnected from the positive heuristic and are irrefutable in the short run by new research findings. Thus, the positive heuristic protects the hard core, as when researchers "put an inconsistency into some temporary ad hoc quarantine" (Lakatos, 1974, p. 143) in order to preserve the guiding conjectural role of the hard core.

Regarding the paradigm concept, Lakatos (1974) objected more to the sociopsychological definition employed by Kuhn (1962) than to the actual word itself (see p. 177). A research program is like a paradigm, he contended, in that it provides a context for researchers to believe in the short-run irrefutability of hard core conjectures. Still, Lakatos (1974) greatly limited the role of paradigms in his metatheory.

The Hard Core of the News Framing Research Program
Entman's (1993) call for a "coherent theory" of framing draws from the views of Kuhn (1962). Therefore, in light of the Lakatosian counterargument, he makes the same mistakes that Kuhn did. He, like Kuhn, conflates a paradigm with a dominant theory. Entman (1993) does not take into account that various, even competing, theories may be required to understand framing. Supported by the hard core, framing researchers should draw liberally from available theories in order to examine particular aspects of the framing process. In addition, he misses the point

that the hard-core conjectural base expands even when research findings fail to fully support theoretical models, for theories are supposed to generate inconsistencies, which, in turn, provide new directions for future research. Thus, to construe news framing as a research program is a positive step toward clarifying both the practical conduct of scholarly inquiry and the real-life complexity of news framing. Ultimately, Entman's (1993) view that the study of framing is incoherent is a result of his view that framing should be a singular paradigm.

The hard core of the news framing research program is reflected in four empirical goals that individual studies pursue to varying degrees. These goals are (a) to identify thematic units called frames; (b) to investigate the antecedent conditions that produce frames; (c) to examine how news frames activate, and interact with, an individual's prior knowledge to affect interpretations, recall of information, decision making, and evaluations, and (d) to examine how news frames shape social-level processes such as public opinion and policy issue debates.

The hard core of framing research can also be stated as four conjectures. Here, Entman (1993) provides useful direction. He states, "Frames have at least four locations in the communication process: the communicator, the text, the receiver, and the culture" (p. 52). The first conjecture is about the content of frames. It states that news frames are themes within news stories that are carried by various kinds of framing devices. The content of the frame amalgamates textual items (words and images) with the contextual treatment that they receive from framing devices. Frames are therefore considered to be ontologically distinct from the topic of the news story (Pan & Kosicki, 1993).

The second conjecture states that news frames are first causes that shape various levels of reality. Whether the story topic is an antiabortion rally (Pan & Kosicki, 1993), nuclear power (Gamson & Mogdiliani, 1989), the federal budget deficit (Jasperson, Shah, Watts, Faber, & Fan, 1998), welfare reform (Lawrence, 2000), a political campaign (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Rhee, 1997), an advertising campaign (Tucker, 1998), or a military conflict (Reese & Buckalew, 1995), frames are powerful discursive cues that can impact cognition (e.g., Rhee, 1997), individual socialization via interpersonal discussions (Gamson, 1992), public opinion formation (Entman, 1991), and group use of media messages to achieve their goals (Gitlin, 1980). "Whatever its specific use," Entman (1993) states, "the concept of framing consistently offers a way to describe the power of a communicating text" (p. 51).

The third conjecture states that news frames interact with the cognitive and social behaviors that they have shaped in the first place. In part, this conjecture is grounded on the point of Kinder and Sanders (1990) that frames lead a double life as "internal structures of the mind" and "devices embedded in political discourse" (p. 74; see Popkin, 1993). In a cognitive state, frames exist as prior knowledge, used by individuals to "efficiently" process information conveyed in news frames (e.g., Rhee, 1997). Individuals also converse about political issues using their mental frames about those issues (Gamson, 1992, 1996). Beyond the cognitive and interpersonal realms, frames operate within the routines and discourses of groups (Gitlin, 1980; Meyer, 1995). For example, advocacy groups have internal framing processes consisting of "alignments" (Snow, Rochford, Worden, & Benford, 1986) that buffer their agenda and routines against media frames (Molotch, 1977).

Thus, the frames of individuals or groups are generally believed to mediate the power of textual frames. As Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992) point out, an individual's prior knowledge provides a basis to "alternatively accept, ignore, and reinterpret the dominant frames offered by the media" (p. 62).

Finally, framing shapes public dialogues about political issues. This conjecture states that journalism is ideologically tied to principles of classical pluralism. Although several cogent rebuttals to classical pluralism purport to more realistically account for democratic functions (see Held, 1987), framing researchers agree that journalists self-consciously play a "conduit" role (see Weaver & Wilhoit, 1986) in which they try to "provide citizens with the information that will enable them to gain an adequate understanding of politics" (Schudson, 1983, p. 15). As a result, framing researchers tend to monitor how well journalists perform this role, taking note, too, that "in mirroring society the media frame…[there is] a particular conception of politics embedded in that society's political life" (Hallin & Mancini, p. 834). For example, in examining how news and women's magazines framed breast cancer in the 1990s, Andsager and Powers (1999) stated, "It is important that news media present accurate and complete portrayals of health issues" because women "tend to rely on magazines in seeking information about breast cancer" (p. 531). This conjecture points to the political ramifications of doing framing research and provides entry into the discipline's self-reflexive dialogues about mass communication research (see Peters, 1989).

The Role of Paradigms in the News Framing Research Program
Because Lakatos (1974) argued that the existence of paradigms misrepresented the underlying rationality of scientific discovery, he sought to limit the explanatory role of paradigms. Yet, Ritzer (1975, 1981, 1992) noted that paradigms can usefully help a discipline to differentiate its schools of thought. A problem within communication is that self-reflexive discussion of its paradigms has generally been couched in terms of a "perpetual identity crisis" (Peters, 1993) owing to its multidisciplinary origins, its subsequent organization into contexts (Delia, 1987; Peters, 1986), and to the "sterile eclecticism" of academic specialization (Craig, 1999; see also Swanson, 1993). For these reasons, communication scholars are unsure about how to leverage the paradigm concept to address the discipline's identity crisis (Beniger, 1993).

Uncertainty about the role of paradigms can be resolved for the purposes of building a new metatheory by reigning in the paradigm concept from the context of the discipline's identity crisis and instead locating paradigms within Lakatosian research programs. In this arrangement, research programs and paradigms refer to different, yet interlocking, dimensions of scholarly activity. Metatheorizing in sociology supports this position. Lauden (1977) and Ritzer (1975, 1981, 1992) argue that sociology is a multiparadigm science and that researchers ought to tackle empirical problems with elements of different paradigms. Shifting this argument, I contend that framing researchers—out of both necessity and ingenuity—have harnessed insights from communication's paradigms in order to guide how they examine hard-core conjectures about frames and framing effects (see Rosengren, 1989). Thus, although single studies cannot explain the whole process, congruity

between theory and paradigm underwrites solid research designs and provides satisfying results about framing even when apparent refutations prompt a revision of theoretical models. This, in turn, allows knowledge about framing to accumulate.

Accordingly, my metatheory retains the paradigm concept. Although paradigms nominally separate framing research into different camps, they also contribute to, and help preserve, the "remarkable continuity" (Lakatos, 1974, p. 132) among the growing community of researchers who study framing. Rosengren (1993) and Beniger (1993) intimate that three paradigms, called constructionist, critical, and cognitive, infuse the communication discipline. Applied to framing research, these paradigms provide researchers with distinct images (see Ritzer, 1975) about the interactions between textual frames and framing effects. The image of *negotiation* characterizes the cognitive paradigm; *co-optation* characterizes the constructionist paradigm; and *domination* characterizes the critical paradigm.

Three Paradigms in the News Framing Research Program

Individual framing studies often examine framing in a spirit of paradigmatic synthesis. However, for practical and epistemological reasons, particular studies settle within a paradigmatic image of frames and framing effects. The following two subsections discuss the three paradigms in framing research and address efforts at paradigmatic synthesis.

News Framing Paradigms in Comparative Perspective

Work guided by the paradigmatic image of negotiation draws from theories that at their root support an effort to understand how frames alter individuals' "trains of thought" (Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997). To alter trains of thought, news coverage must make a topic and frame(s) accessible to an individual. Individuals are "exquisitely sensitive" (Iyengar, 1991, p. 11) to accessible information in the process of making decisions, formulating judgments, or expressing opinions (see Taylor & Crocker, 1981, p. 93; Wyer & Srull, 1981). Relying on accessible information, individuals activate parts of prior knowledge that most expeditiously help them to make decisions and form interpretations (Iyengar & Kinder, 1987, p. 64).

Negotiation therefore occurs at the point of contact of frame and an individual's prior knowledge, which in the cognitivist framing literature is theorized to exist as semantic nodal structures arrayed schematically in memory (e.g., Cappella & Jamieson, 1997; Rhee, 1997). Schemata are particularly active at the time of an encounter with a stimulus message, where they organize and filter incoming information, and integrate it into existing, or prior, knowledge (Rummelhart, 1984; Taylor & Crocker, 1981). Schemata recently activated by frames, especially those that have been used frequently in the past, will remain on the top of the mental bin, enabling these schemata to direct how an individual recognizes and uses framed information (Wyer & Srull, 1981). In this way, prior knowledge is believed to mediate the power of frames in a decision-making or evaluative context (McLeod & Detenber, 1999; Rhee, 1997).

News frames, however, in the cognitive paradigm also create semantic associations within an individual's schemata. Textual propositions that encode frames are, at least for a short period of time, "let in" by the individual into their prior knowledge, providing the basis by which schemata are updated and modified (Patterson, 1993; Rhee, 1997). Thus, although cognitivists regularly find that thoughts not explicitly related to a particular news frame are brought to an individual's mind (Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997), they are mainly interested in detecting thoughts that mirror propositions encoded in frames (see Domke, McCoy, & Torres, 1999; Domke & Shah, 1995; Domke, Shah, & Wackman, 1998; McLeod & Detenber, 1999; Popkin, 1993; Schenck-Hamlin, Proctor, & Rumsey, 2000; Shah, Domke, & Wackman, 1996, 1997; Sotirovic, 2000; Tewksbury, Jones, Peske, Raymond, & Vig, 2000; Valkenberg, Semetko, & deVreese, 1999).

Scholars who work within the critical paradigm (Akhavan-Majid & Ramaprasad, 1998; Dobkin, 1993; Domke, 1996, 1997; Entman, 1991; Entman & Rojecki, 1993; Gitlin, 1980; Hackett & Zhao, 1994; Parenti, 1986; Rachlin, 1988; Reese & Buckalew, 1995; Solomon, 1992; Tuchman, 1978; Tucker, 1998; Watkins, 2001; Woo, 1996) claim that frames are the outcome of newsgathering routines by which journalists convey information about issues and events from the perspective of values held by political and economic elites (Hackett, 1984, pp. 246–248; Reese & Buckekew, 1995). These frames are thought to dominate news coverage. For example, Martin and Oshagen (1997) examined news coverage of a December 1991 General Motors announcement that the company would close one of its assembly plants. Supported by political economy theory, they discovered a frame in which citizens were portrayed as adapting to difficult but necessary business decisions. They concluded, "News is a significant part of the structuration process as it works to frame the hegemonic social relations in which downsizing is inevitable and complicity is necessary for success" (p. 690).

Frames that paradigmatically dominate news are also believed to dominate audiences. Martin and Oshagen (1997) state that frames linked to hegemonic processes "limit the range of debate . . . and occlude the potential for a democratic public sphere" (Martin & Oshagen, 1997, p. 691). Similarly, in Entman's (1991) study of the two dominant frames in U.S. news of the 1983 downing of KAL 007 by a Soviet fighter jet and the downing of an Iranian commercial plane by an American warship, he suggested that "politically impressive majorities would come to congruent understandings" of the events in terms that mirrored U.S. political interests (p. 8; see also, Rachlin, 1988; Solomon, 1992).

Cognitive and critical paradigms differ in three ways vis-à-vis hard core conjectures about framing. First, critical scholars argue that news organizations select some information and intentionally omit other information such that different frames of a topic either will not exist or will still foster a single viewpoint supportive of the status quo (Reese & Buckalew, 1995; Solomon, 1990; Watkins, 2001). Conversely, cognitivist studies regularly point out that journalists routinely create meaningfully different frames about an issue or event within a single news item or among many stories. Second, those who work in the critical paradigm do not treat political power as being distributed in a pluralist way, although they presume that many political views should be made available to the public. Cognitivists see

journalists as being more responsive to the demands of pluralistic presentation of information. Accordingly, critical scholars often measure public opinion in the aggregate to show how it is swayed en masse by frames. Researchers in the cognitive paradigm often examine framing effects with experiments for they think that subjects can be exposed to meaningfully different frames on a single topic. Third, although critical scholars leave the door open for individuals to cognitively mediate the power of news frames, they also believe that, ultimately, news frames constrict political consciousness. Alternatively, cognitivists design studies to detect slight variations in activated knowledge because they think that individuals can flexibly decode frames and use them to make decisions and judgments (e.g., Rhee, 1997).

The constructionist paradigm provides yet a third perspective on the study of framing. Constructionists hold that journalists are information processors who create "interpretive packages" of the positions of politically invested "sponsors" (e.g., sources) in order to both reflect and add to the "issue culture" of the topic (Gamson & Mogdiliani, 1987, 1989). Yet, in the process, certain civic opportunities are believed to be thwarted. For example, news frames: (a) constrain economically distressed communities from seeing their assets (Ettema & Peer, 1996); (b) constrict political awareness of individuals (Gamson, 1992, 1996); (c) thwart the aims of social movement groups (Meyer, 1995; Molotch, 1977; Pride, 1995; Snow & Benford, 1992); and (d) set parameters for policy debates not necessarily in agreement with democratic norms (Andsager, 2000; Andsager & Powers, 1999; Ashley & Olson, 1998; Hornig, 1992; Jasperson et al., 1998; Goshorn & Gandy, 1995; Norris, 1995; Pan & Kosicki, 1993; Powers & Andsager, 1999; Terkildsen, Schnell, & Ling, 1998; Tulloch & Chapman, 1992).

A paradigmatic image of co-optation supports constructionist framing research. This paradigm stipulates that a frame can dominate coverage for long periods of time, as, for example, when Gamson and Modigliani (1989) found that a "progress" frame dominated news of nuclear power from 1945 to the 1970s. Yet, contrary to the critical paradigm's image of domination, the co-optation image allows constructionists to see frames as a "tool kit" (see Swidler, 1986) from which citizens *ought to* draw in order to form their opinions about issues (Gamson & Mogdiliani, 1989, p. 10; see also Gamson, 1992, 1996). Making sense of the world "requires an effort," contend Gamson and Mogdiliani (1989), and "those tools that are developed, spotlighted, and made readily accessible have a higher degree of being used" (p. 10).

Other differences between the constructionist and critical paradigms emerge in light of framing's hard-core conjectures. Constructionists believe that news organizations limit the range of information about a topic because journalists judge that there are few credible sponsors (i.e., sources) about the topic. Critical scholars— even those who use the nomenclature of interpretive packages (e.g., Solomon, 1992)—view source selection as a process of media hegemony. Thus, even when constructionists find that a news frame pervades coverage of an issue for a period of time, they believe that it still contains a range of viewpoints that is potentially useful to the public's understanding of policy issues (Andsager, 2000; Andsager & Powers, 1999). This belief is also evident in constructionist research that ties the

success of social or community movements to media frames (Molotch, 1977; Pride, 1995). On the other hand, critical scholars argue that information contrary to hegemonic stances is anamolous and not apt to foster alternative viewpoints within the audience (Entman, 1991).

Interestingly, framing researchers regularly cite Goffman (1974) and Tuchman (1978) to make the point that news frames are socially constructed via newswork. However, Goffman's ideas more appropriately support constructionist research, whereas Tuchman's support critical research. Tuchman (1978) repudiates Goffman's (1974) notion of frame because she thinks he does not adequately explain the ideological functions of newswork. "[Goffman] is interested in the moods and gestures that 'key' a phenomenon from one frame to another," Tuchman (1978) argues, "but not in the institutional mechanisms that accomplish transformation" (p. 195).

Paradigmatic images generate differences between constructionists and cognitivists about the principle mechanisms of framing effects. Although both assign importance to the accessibility of framed information, to cognitivists framing effects ensue when information made accessible to an individual interacts with their prior knowledge (see Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997). Constructionists shift the locus of framing effects from the information-processing context to articulations of public opinion and political socialization (see Crigler, 1996; Gamson & Mogdiliani, 1987, 1989; Pan & Kosicki, 1993). Thus, when constructionists investigate framing effects on the level of the individual (e.g., Gamson, 1992), they use focus groups, not the thought-listing procedures regularly employed in experimental designs working in the cognitive paradigm (e.g., Valkenburg, Semetko, & deVreese, 1999). Still, constuctionists and cognitivists both think that "individuals do not slavishly follow the framing of issues in the mass media" (Neuman, Just, & Crigler, 1992, p. 77). Cognitivists, meanwhile, are interested in how an individual's encounter with a news frame becomes an intepretation that is stored in memory and activated in future encounters with similar frames. Constructionists who examine effects on the level of the individual are less interested in providing an encounter with a frame. Rather, they want to see how individuals articulate their own views in contexts that must have included prior exposure to news frames and now entail socialization based on conversations about these frames.

Working "Across" Paradigms

A cursory look at most framing studies shows that researchers synthesize ideas from different paradigms. However, it is difficult to empirically examine frames *and* framing effects under the simultaneous guidance of more than one paradigmatic image. Of course, many framing studies examine content only (e.g., Callaghan & Schnell, 2001; Devitt, 1997; deVreese, Peter, & Semetko, 2001; Kerbel, Apee, & Ross, 2000; Lawrence, 2000; Norris, 1995; Phelan & Algan, 2001; Simon & Xenos, 2000) and the paradigmatic image guiding these studies must be inferred or projected. (Note: I have made such inferences and projections when referring to content-only studies in the previous section.) Paradigmatic images, however, force full-fledged framing studies to examine hard-core conjectures with selective theories and research designs.

For example, McLeod and Detenber (1999), working in the cognitive paradigm, concluded:

> Though the theoretical underpinnings of this study lie in framing effects, the methods used are more akin to the experimental approach of the media effects tradition than to the methods prescribed by Gamson. To get at the interpretive processes that are at the core of his constructionist model, more open-ended response items could be used for dependent measures. (p. 20)

These remarks suggest a combination of cognitive and constructionist paradigms. Whereas experimentalists in the cognitive paradigm regularly employ open-ended thought-listing measures (e.g., Iyengar, 1991; Price, Tewksbury, & Powers, 1997), these are designed to detect the extent to which prior knowledge (i.e., memory-based semantic constructs) has been activated by exposure to news frames. On the other hand, Gamson uses open-ended measures to observe how individuals use frames in the process of socialization and political mobilization (see Gamson, 1992).

Iyengar's (1991) work provides another example of apparent paradigmatic synthesis. He investigated the effects of episodic and thematic news frames in television news on individuals' attributions of responsibility for six social issues (e.g., crime and terrorism). Generally, news depicted these issues episodically, in terms of "concrete instances or events" (p. 18), rather than thematically, in terms of collective outcomes, policy debates, or historical trends. Iyengar (1991) claimed that the prevalent episodic frame manifested a "hegemonic model of public communication" (p. 137). Yet, he found that a thematic frame quite frequently occurred in the lead-in remarks by network anchors, even in stories that were otherwise episodic. Having an alternative frame in a significant structural position in the story, like the headline and lead paragraph of a print news story (see Neuman, Just, & Krigler, 1992; Pan & Kosicki, 1993), means that it is unlikely that the framing of social problems in episodic terms was based in a process of hegemony. Moreover, Iyengar (1991) drew his most important theoretical input about the nature of framing effects from work on the cognitive accessibility bias and from work in cognitive science about the importance of choice cues in decision-making tasks (e.g., Kahneman & Tversky, 1984). His use of these theories, along with the importance he attributed to partisan affiliations and media use (see p. 126), suggest that he worked mainly from the image of cognitive negotiation.

Benefits of a Multiparadigmatic View of the News Framing Research Program

Whereas Entman (1993) articulated the benefits of a mended paradigm of framing, I expound the benefits of a multiparadigmatic view of the news framing research program. Namely, a multiparadigmatic view engenders a model of news framing that provides the basis from which to critically reconsider Entman's (1993) position that framing scholarship disserves the communication discipline.
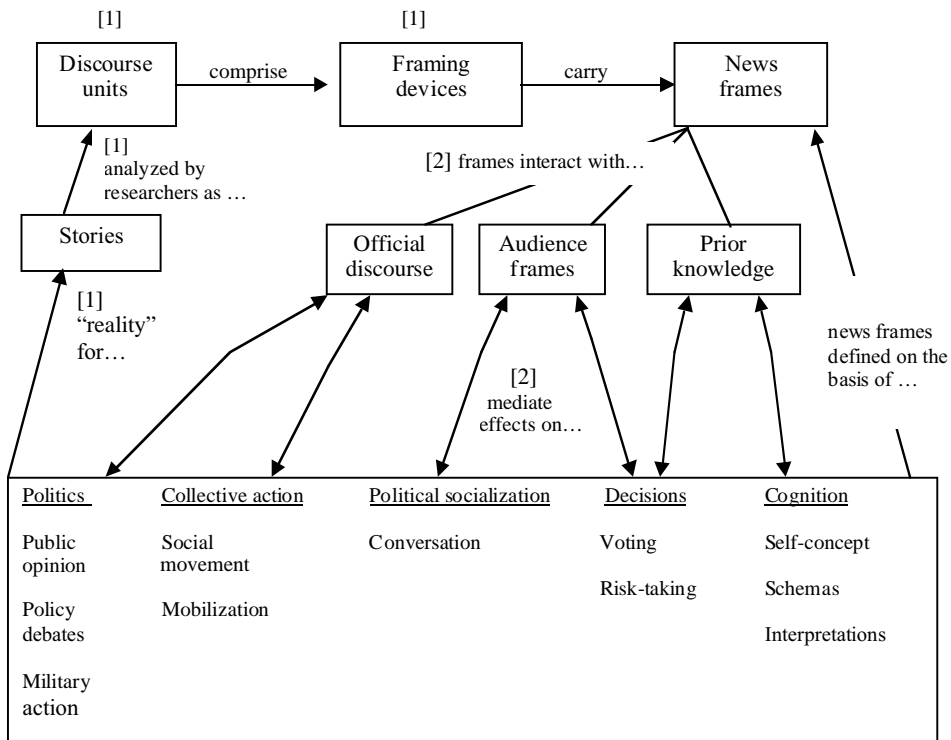
Note. [1] = Frame construction flow; [2] = Framing effects flow; [3] Frame definition flow

Figure 1. A model of the news framing process

A Model of the News Framing Process

The study of news framing can be viewed as a reflexive enterprise that has both uncovered the reality of news framing and provided theoretical and methodological tools with which to trace how this knowledge has grown. Figure 1 shows both the complicated reality of news framing and the deeply practical research endeavor, characterized by different yet interconnected paradigmatic approaches, by which this reality has been gradually exposed.

According to this model, news framing has three subprocesses: (a) a frame construction flow, (b) a framing effects flow, and (c) a frame definition flow. The frame construction flow (the #1's in the model) represents a combination of the two framing processes that Scheufele (1999) calls frame building and frame setting. Yet, his model is based on a system of inputs and outcomes; here, I am interested in how scholars conceptualize the processes by which journalists construct frames in new stories. Accordingly, the frame construction flow shows that researchers take up where journalists leave off. "Reality" to journalists consists of items at the bottom of the figure. Although news frames have shaped these processes, they are nonetheless the stuff of news stories about reality. In general, journalists do not engage in extensive self-reflexive examination of the role news

plays in the construction of reality (Tuchman, 1978). Researchers interested in discovering a frame (or frames) must first pinpoint particular words and images (Entman, 1991). Beyond that, however, researchers must identify journalistic intentions, news values, discursive structures, and content formats that integrate the words and images of a news story into a frame. Although there is no agreed upon nomenclature, framing analysts commonly use the term "framing device" to denote these constitutive elements of news frames. Framing devices carry news frames (Cappella & Jamieson, 1997, p. 45).

The literature reveals a wide spectrum of framing devices. Gitlin (1980) examined mainstream news coverage of the Students for a Democratic Society (SDS) and found a single frame was carried by the devices of trivialization, polarization, emphasis on internal dissention, marginalization, undercounting, and disparagement of the movement's effectiveness (pp. 27–28). Entman (1993) defines frames on the basis of how issues or events are carried by framing devices that define problems, diagnose causes, make moral judgments, and suggest remedies. In work that preceded Iyengar's (1991) investigation of episodic and thematic frames, Iyengar and Kinder (1987) examined three framing devices in news coverage about social problems in which (a) the president was responsible for both causing and curing a problem (the augmentation condition); (b) agents other than the president were responsible for the problem (the discounting condition), and (c) no identifiable person was responsible (the agnostic condition). Neuman, Just, and Crigler (1992) identified frames based on words that referred to ideas such as "human interest" and "conflict"—as long those words also stated a policy or social problem, set the story in time, and made some sort of moral prognostication. Similarly, Price et al. (1997) identified three news frames, called conflict, human interest, and consequence, on the basis of words in the story reflecting those news values.

Given the diversity of framing devices, Entman (1993) seems correct in stating that framing has a scattered conceptualization. Yet, in light of the competitive nature of the research program, framing researchers are encouraged to use all available unitizing techniques found in content analysis (see Riffe, Lacy, & Fico, 1998, ch. 4) and discourse analysis (see Pan & Kosicki, 1993; van Dijk, 1988) in order to defend the existence of different framing devices and provide the means to detect frames in news. Paradigmatic images inflect the frame construction flow among different studies. For example, the single frame of the SDS movement was conceived by Gitlin (1980) to dominate public opinion about the movement. The framing devices that communicated level of status-quo support in the frames of McLeod and Detenber (1999)—for example, the way a protestor was portrayed on camera—are similar in conception to those of Gitlin. Yet, McLeod and Detenber (1999) experimentally manipulated frames in news stories of political protest in order to detect how "*cognitive* responses to media content [were made] more salient or . . . accessible to the viewer" (emphasis added, p. 4). Pan and Kosicki (1993) used framing devices based on syntactical, script, thematic, and rhetorical structures and found a dominant frame in a story about an abortion rally that marginalized the protestors. In their constructivist approach, this story presented readers with a "data matrix of signifying elements" (p. 69) to construct their own meanings of the event.

The framing effects flow (see the # 2s in Figure 1) indicates that what frames affect—the items in the bottom box—are mediated by intervening processes. These range from official discourses of government figures, political candidates, and social movements, to audience frames that generate opinions of ordinary people in mundane conversations, to the prior knowledge underlying individuals' decision-making and interpretations. Framing effects, then, are not one-way. For example, movement activists must develop discourses and techniques suited to obtaining coverage from mainstream news organizations who are not entirely eager to provide them with coverage that meets their goals (Molotch, 1977). Movement mobilization is shaped by news coverage, but the discourses of the movement also interact with news frames to mitigate the effects of news frames and to become the reality of that group. This is also the case with the other types of framing effects, in which cognitive schemata (Rhee, 1997), political socialization (Gamson, 1992), and other outcomes are shaped by news frames, yet also mitigate their power.

The frame definition flow (see #3 in Figure 1) refers to a recursive loop in the study of framing. By the time a particular study has "arrived" at the bottom of the figure, the starting point for the frame definition flow, a framing researcher must have already (a) identified framing devices that carry frames; (b) recognized or actually investigated the effects of news frames on individual- or social-level reality; and (c) recognized that news stories purvey frames of issues and events based on realities that the framing process has to some extent created. Thus, once researchers "get their feet wet" in framing research, they are prompted to do what Entman (1993) advocates. Namely, they look at "reality"—the items in the bottom of the box—for evidence of the process that must have occurred for frames to be "the imprint of power" (Entman, 1993, p. 55) on an individual or a group. In so doing, researchers are constantly suggesting "precise and universal understandings" of the terms frame, framing, and framework (Entman, 1993, p. 52), albeit from the standpoint of testing middle-range theories of framing. As a result, different definitions of "frame" are inevitable. For example, Cappella and Jamieson's (1997) definition of a news frame as the "treatment" of an issue differs from that of Shah, Domke, and Wackman (1996), who define a frame as the presentation of an identical set of consequences of a policy issue in different ways. Different definitions of "frame" result from the practical necessity for researchers to use paradigmatic images to develop their ideas about what frames are and how they function within a complex process.

Understanding Framing and Understanding the Study of Framing
Entman's (1993) critique of framing was couched in a discussion about communication's disciplinary status within two special issues of the *Journal of Communication* (Levy & Gurevitch, 1993a, 1993b). There, Rosengren (1993) revisited the four research traditions in communication (what he referred to as "paradigms" in his contribution to the 1983 "ferment" issue), bemoaning that these traditions have led to fragmentation rather than fermentation in the field. He stated, "Personally, I am convinced that a fundamental cause for the present fragmentation in communication studies is the fact that an increasing number of research

traditions lack the basic preconditions for cumulativity. Cumulative growth in science and scholarship presupposes both confrontation and cooperation" (p. 9). In referring to framing as a "scattered conceptualization," Entman (1993) would seem to agree that findings from framing research have not really accumulated into a cohesive body of knowledge. Yet, Rosengren's (1993) point—that knowledge grows by both confrontation and cooperation—is precisely how a Lakatosian research program operates. In individual framing studies, researchers defend theories for their ability to predict phenomena and positively appraise them when they open up new directions (i.e., Lakatos's "auxiliary hypotheses") for future research. As a result, the community of framing researchers is stimulated to reflect upon hardcore conjectures, which, in turn, is what has "allowed" the complexity and subtlety of framing to gradually succumb to empirical inquiry. Paradigms contribute to this. They do not provide Kuhnian comfort in telling framing researchers which theories or methods are the "right" way to study framing. Rather, they provide a conjectural base in addition to the hard core from which researchers can design solid studies, interpret results, and turn apparent refutations into potentially promising leads for future research.

Thus, communication scholars should reconsider the role of paradigms in enabling complex processes to be brought to light. Paradigms are vital to scientific discovery; they are not tropes in the field's self-reflexive discussions about its fragmentation and status. It is not surprising that the three paradigms that nominally separate framing research reflect well-known cleavages in the communication discipline—and if we look to Habermas (1972), the "cognitive interests" (technical, emancipatory, and practical) that both divide and energize the humanities and social sciences. Yet, one of the more interesting threads in the "Future of the Field" special issues (Levy & Gurevitch, 1993a, 1993b) is that communication's disciplinary status should not be tied to how well scholars unify theories from the social sciences or humanities in order to create "new" knowledge (see Craig, 1999). The vitality and success of communication ought to be gauged vis-à-vis how well researchers coordinate theories toward the end of elaborating and understanding complex communication processes (Babrow, 1993; Dervin, 1993; Halloran, 1983). By harnessing the power of communication's paradigms—if not consciously, then certainly via the organic processes of the research program—framing researchers have worked "together" to build knowledge about a complex process. The mission of the communication discipline is well served by what they have so far accomplished.

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